**Promoting Interest in Content Area Reading at Home**

Teachers are responsible for promoting independent reading at school. But you can do a lot to encourage content area independent reading in the classroom and at home, too. Encouraging your child to read informational books at home helps your child do better in school subjects like social studies and science. Here are some suggestions:

* Make books part of the environment. Find opportunities to connect books to your child’s life. Place books about fish near the aquarium or books about hamsters near the hamster cage or children’s books about cooking in the kitchen.
* Take your child to libraries, museums, and parks. Community-based learning experiences provide a natural springboard to learning and can easily be connected with books. If you take your child to see dinosaur bones at the Museum of Natural History, for instance, find a book about dinosaurs you can read together. If your family visits Sea World, find books about dolphins or whales that would interest your child.
* Read about famous people. Many children enjoy biographies about their favorite sports personalities, actors, musicians, or authors. Keeping a supply of interesting biographies available can heighten engagement and help students identify with their heroes. Reading about famous people in magazines like *Sports Illustrated for Kids* or *Time for Kids* can motivate children to read more.
* Read to complete a task. Many children enjoy creating things, whether preparing a meal, making a friendship bracelet, or creating a family scrapbook. Give your child a book or manual to read to complete a task—this builds skill in following directions and makes reading interesting.
* Read about hobbies. Hobbies are a natural entrance into the world of reading. Books and magazines about skateboarding, basketball, dancing, art, or music let children explore the things that interest them and provide reading opportunities that may not be available in school.

From *Independent Reading: Creating Lifelong Readers* by Barbara Moss and Terrell A. Young.